



LAKE CHAPALA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019

Upcoming LCUUF Sunday Services

- Feb. 3rd *Words Matter (More Than You Think)* “Whenever two or more are gathered ... there will be conflict.” This is a truism that applies to all organizations, including (perhaps especially) congregations. We’ll explore healthy ways to surface and deal with conflict, in particular considering the techniques of Compassionate Communication. Rev. Matt Alspaugh is the presenter and Cate Howell will be the service leader. **This service is followed by our Annual General Meeting.**
- Feb. 10th *Our Mexican Neighbors* - Our Mexican neighbors at Lakeside are not a homogenous group with one identity, but a layering of cultures and socio-economic groups. Janice Kimball, a 23 year resident of Mexico, will help us see life from our neighbors’ perspective, give us glimpses into their daily lives and struggles, explain the importance and *real* reasons behind our neighbors’ multitude of festivals and celebrations... and their seemingly fascination for fireworks. Meredith Miller will demonstrate Mexican sign language. Susan Miller is service leader.
- Feb. 17th *Humans and the Rest of Life on our Planet* - Human beings have emerged as the dominant life form on our planet. We seem to have an ambivalent attitude to many species, loving some, competing for habitat and resources for most. How can we with the most developed brains be ethical in our relationship to them. Speakers will be Paul Bennett and Fred Koesling.
- Feb. 24th UN Day – Envisioning a Better World – Rev. Matt Alspaugh Service Leader is Mardele Harland In a time of UN a government shutdown to the north, Brexit to the east, a gas crisis here global warming everywhere it’s hard to imagine a hopeful future. But let’s do just that, take a break from the present and ponder what a better future might be like. We have help with UN’s comprehensive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. And we’ll imagine other possibilities for a brighter future.

DID YOU KNOW that we have a new website? Interested in what the next topic is at fellowship? Find it there! Need a copy of an older newsletter? Yep, we’ve got it! Do you have friends visiting Lakeside who need information on our fellowship? Send them this link - www.lakechapalauu.org



MESSAGE FROM REV. MATT

Is it possible to simultaneously believe two incompatible beliefs? I've been told that one mark of a good minister is to keep your congregation guessing about your own theology. If you serve a largely humanist congregation, then lead them to believe you are a theist, if you serve a theist congregation, put on your humanist or atheist hat. Keep them on edge. But the truth is, I've not been trying to confuse you. I find myself contented with aspects of both the atheist and theist camps (and the tracks in between them, however thin).

I love the world of science and the ways of knowing the world through direct sensory observation and experimentation. I cherish the advances that humankind has made in understanding the physical world. I am in awe upon learning that what happened at the smallest subatomic scales in the first instants of the universe's existence is now writ large across the face of the universe. I'm amazed that we are describing with increasing precision how evolution of all living creatures on the global scale is mediated by genomic coding at the smallest scales. I am struck by recent developments in neuroscience and psychology that illuminate moral behavior and theories of mind and consciousness. The realm of empirical inquiry is so full and rich that I am content even if that's all there is. In seeking out the knowledge of the universe, my head is happy.

But there is a part of me that is not content, that has had hints and intuitions of something beyond even this beautiful universe. I yearn to be part of this shadowy, mysterious other, this universal reality, bigger and more meaningful than everything my eyes can see, ears can hear, and fingers can feel. Some primal animal part of me calls out for union -- or perhaps reunion -- with this ground of being, or universal love, or oversoul, as others have tried to name it. As I said on a Sunday last year, I desire to fully inhabit a universe animated, alive: shimmering, crackling, pulsating with creativity, with life beyond our awareness--a world of wonder. In answering the call of this yearning, my heart is satisfied.

I find I dwell in either domain of head and heart quite comfortably. I don't find myself in the in-between state of an agnostic or an apatheist; rather I find myself going both ways at once. Which way is more true and right? If true and right is what leads to good decisions and proper choices, I'm realizing that both the wise head and the warm heart tend to point in the same direction. That's been my personal experience, and I take great contentment in that awareness.

What of your own theology? Do you, too, hold incompatible beliefs? Has your theology been evolving? I'd love to converse on such things of deep meaning.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Lew Crippen, President

As we move from our Pledge month to our Annual General Meeting it is a time to begin a new year for the Fellowship and a time for reflection on the year past. We have continued to grow, both in terms of new members and visitors. We have moved from volunteer musicians (here a big shout out to Mardele) to paid, part-time professionals (thanks to Bob Koches for finding Michael). Our Shared Basket program (due to a suggestion by Rev. Matt) has benefitted several deserving groups in our local community. Donations of musical instruments by Fellowship members Sue Kelley and Marguerite Ponder have greatly helped the music program in San Juan Cosalá. The establishment of a Tax Exempt entity in the US, will allow members and friends to leave bequests that will provide long-term support to our Fellowship. This idea came mostly from Norman Woods and Rev. Matt and was initially graciously supported with time, talent and funds from Norman. In particular the *ad-hoc* committee detail work was due to the efforts of Lorna Dean. Make sure to join us for the Annual General Meeting on February 3rd after the service. As an inducement, we will provide pizza from M & J Pizza.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - BILL & PIXIE FRAYER

Pixie and Bill Frayer said were surprised to receive a request to appear as member profiles in the LCUUF newsletter. Although they are no longer able to participate, they said they are glad that the Lakeside expat UU's remember them!

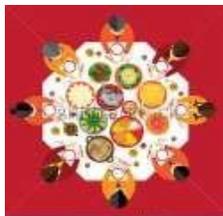
The Frayers lived at Lakeside and regularly participated in the fellowship for ten years, for five years as full timers then as snowbirds. Now they are living back home in Maine and active in their very special UU congregation there.

Pixie was born in Skowhegan, Maine, in the house that the famous Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith lived in. Maybe that's why she's always had such an independent streak. (Ask Bill). She grew up in the famous shipbuilding city of Bath where her father worked for many years as a shipbuilder. She became a mother at 21, had two children, Eric and Wendy, and divorced. She and Bill met at WT Grants department store where they were both employed. They married in 1974 and moved north to Wilton, Maine, where they raised their children (Bill adopted Eric and Wendy) and they had their daughter, Cassie in 1975. For many years, Pixie worked as a waitress in the evenings, so Bill could be home with the kids. She later became a full-time educator working with children with special needs. She started working on her bachelor's degree in her 40's and graduated from the University of Southern Maine in her early 50's, summa cum laude, with a degree in social and behavioral science. She finished up her teaching career, before moving to Mexico in 2007, teaching

developmental reading and ESL classes at Central Maine Community College. Pixie has, for many years been interested in earth-centered pagan spirituality. She has participated in goddess study groups both in Mexico and in Maine. While in Mexico she taught English at Love in Action in Chapala. Her hero is Eleanor Roosevelt.

Bill was born and raised in the Philadelphia area where his dad was an ophthalmologist at Penn. He was determined to follow in his dad's footsteps and go to medical school. He worked in a Providence, RI hospital while he was taking pre-med courses at Brown. He says he finally came to his senses and decided to major in English and pursue a teaching career. Bill taught in the Humanities Dept. at Central Maine Community College where he chaired the department and taught courses in writing, communication, critical thinking, ethics, and western thought and culture. He has published a critical thinking textbook and four volumes of poetry. While living in Ajijic, he was active in the writers' community and for ten years wrote the column "Uncommon Common Sense" in *El Ojo del Lago*. He enjoys playing acoustic guitar and writing poetry. His hero is FDR. When driving to Mexico in 2007, they both enjoyed visiting the Roosevelt estate and Eleanor's home, Valhalla in Hyde Park, NY. They have adapted to the Maine lifestyle again purchasing a house with a small driveway, a hefty snow blower, a good Jøtl gas stove, lobster picks, LL Bean plaid shirts, and lot of Maine microbrews

Submitted by Jan Manning



Circle Suppers will be held in February/March. Please sign up at the Welcome Table and indicate if you would like to be a guest or a host. **Assignments will be e-mailed and posted on the bulletin board in early February.** If you need more information contact Kathy Koches at kkoches@gmail.com



PAYING YOUR PLEDGE

Members and friends who have submitted a Pledge Card for the fiscal year, February 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020, can pay their pledge by one of the following methods:

1. Mexican Pesos: To pay in Mexican pesos, put the pesos in an envelope with your name on it, then put the envelope in the collection basket on Sundays. All amounts received after February 1, 2019, will be counted towards your pledge for 2019-20.

2. U.S. Dollars: To pay in U.S. dollars, go to the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston's website <http://www.firstchurchnow.org> and click on the Donate button in the top right corner and follow the steps. It is important to set the Donation Start Date for February 1, 2019, or later, so that your payment is credited to the correct fiscal year. Detailed instructions are available on the LCUUF website at <http://lakechapalauu.org/pledge/> There are also paper copies of the Pledging Instructions on the Welcome Table.

2. Canadian Dollars: It is possible to pay with a Canadian credit card using the First Unitarian Universalist Church's website, but the amount must be specified in U.S. dollars. Canadian bank routing numbers do not work on the website.

The Pledge Team would like to express its thanks to all the members and friends who have pledged for the upcoming fiscal year.



Please send any announcements for February's services to Donna Burroughs at: donna.burroughs@gmail.com



WELCOMING AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

We have 9 new members who chosen to join our fellowship: **Michele Naquaiya, Paula Odom, Tonja Murphy, John de Waal, Jak Koke, Karawynn Long, Lamar Allen, Penney Humphreys, and Charlie Jacobs.** We will be officially acknowledging and welcoming each of them to our fellowship on **February 3rd during our New Member Ceremony.**

Our committee needs an additional member. You are welcome to join us for one of our meetings or contact our new chairperson, Paula Odom, e-mail: paulaodom01@gmail.com, phone: 766 0698.



SUNDAY SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Sunday Service Coordinator for February is Catherine Luria. The Sunday Service Coordinator for March and April is Trudy Crippen. Information regarding services can be found on the LCUUF website under "Worship/Sunday Services."

The Sunday Service Committee is seeking one more member to join us in planning services for 2019. If you are interested please contact Chairman Catherine Luria at CLuriaARNP@gmail.com or 766-1552.



HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP

SERMON WRITING SEMINAR

In this four session seminar, we will focus on writing for Sunday service presentation - writing what many would call 'sermons'; in part we consider how this kind of writing is different from lectures, speeches, print, etc. The seminar equips participants with tools and techniques that they can use to prepare more effective Sunday services.

This is the second time Rev. Matt will teach this seminar at LCUUF. It is based on the book "The Shared Pulpit" by Rev. Erika Hewitt. We will have 4 sessions, each about 2 1/2 hours long. We will start Monday, March 11, meet every other week, and end on April 22. There will be some writing homework, with the final writing product being a sermon or talk. People can then decide whether or not to present this for a Sunday service. If you are interested, please write me at minister@lakechapalauu.org.

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on February 25th at 1:30 at the Fellowship – Please note the change of time. Hang on to your philosophical hats as we discuss the relationship between Mathematics and Reality. Mathematics has been called the language of the universe. Scientists and engineers often speak of the elegance of mathematics when describing physical reality, citing examples such as π , $E=mc^2$, and even something as simple as using abstract integers to count real-world objects. While these examples demonstrate how useful math can be for us, does it mean that the physical world naturally follows the rules of mathematics as its "mother tongue," and that mathematics has its own existence that is out there waiting to be discovered? This point of view on the nature of the relationship between mathematics and the physical world is called Platonism. The opposing viewpoint is that mathematical Platonism is an inaccurate view of reality, and non-Platonist notion that mathematics is a product of the human imagination that we tailor to describe reality. All are welcome and if you want the reading material on the subject contact Bob Koches at bobkoches@gmail.com



FEBRUARY

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|--------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Eric Luria | 05 Robin McCormick |
| 13 Donna Burroughs | 12 Mary Roam |
| 16 Janice Kimball | 16 Diane VanBrocklin |
| 22 Karawynn Long | 23 Susan Reynolds |
| 26 Liz Moulder | |



The LCUUF Newsletter is produced to provide LCUUF news to members and friends. Deadline for contributions to the March newsletter is February 20th to be sent to: Editor: Kathy Koches at: kkoches@gmail.com